Words Matter! Building a Literacy-Rich Home Environment

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW
Our words are powerful. In this workshop families embrace the importance of home language, biliteracy, and creating literacy routines with their children. Experiential activities, videos, and discussions give families tools to support their child’s language, pre-reading/reading, and drawing/writing development.
Family Workshop: Words Matter! Building a Literacy-Rich Home Environment

INTENDED TIMEFRAME
This is a 1 hour workshop. This facilitator’s guide includes an optional 20 minute extension.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
Participants will:
» Discover what a literacy-rich home environment is and why it is important for school and life success.
» Practice learning activities that build a literacy-rich home.
» Use ReadyRosie to extend literacy learning at home as part of daily life.

WORKSHOP FORMAT
Note: Each activity has a recommended video but other video options are provided so facilitators can customize the workshop to meet the age/skill needs of participating families.
1. Welcome and Warm-Up
2. A Literacy-Rich Home Exploration
3. Language and Communication Practice
4. Literacy Skills Practice
5. ReadyRosie as a Learning Tool Practice
6. Closure

MATERIALS
1. PowerPoint Presentation
2. Materials
   » Sign-in sheet
   » Name tags for participants
   » Flipchart paper
   » Idea Catcher, paper, and pencils for participants to take notes
   » High quality, diverse children’s books to practice read aloud skills
     (Minimum - one per table)
   » Community resource handouts
     (Local Head Start to provide local community resource handouts you want families to know about.)
   » Evaluation

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Welcome and Warm-Up
15 minutes

Slide 1
Words Matter! Building a Literacy-Rich Home Environment

**ACTIVITY**

Welcome families and introduce yourself

1. Introduce yourself and share why you are excited about facilitating the workshop.
2. Take care of any housekeeping items, such as location of restrooms and announcements.
3. Discuss the following:
   - This is a safe place; we are all learning together. All discussions and things we share are confidential.
   - This is a chance to build community, to connect and learn from each other.
   - Please put your cell phones on vibrate.
   - We are on workshop ____ of the series. In our last workshop we discussed __________. How did your home practice go?

Slide 2
Warm-up Childhood Memory (5 Minutes)

**ACTIVITY**

Take a moment to think of a favorite story, book, or song from your childhood. Who shared it with you? Why did you love it?

**PRACTICE**
Pair and Share: Introduce yourself to someone at your table and share your memory.

**DEBRIEF/REFLECT**

1. Ask: Does anyone want to share a memory or what you learned from your neighbor?
2. Ask: How did your memory make you feel?

**SUMMARY**
Recap discussion by summarizing key points participants shared and then stating:

1. Sharing stories, reading books, singing, and talking together are the building blocks of a literacy-rich home in every culture.
2. These activities build important literacy skills, family bonds, and memories.

**TRANSITION**
In today's session we'll be exploring these concepts in-depth.

Slide 3
Workshop Objectives

**ACTIVITY**
Share workshop objectives by stating that today we will:

» Explore what a literacy-rich home environment is and why it is important for school and life success.
» Practice learning activities that build language and literacy skills.
» Practice using ReadyRosie, so you know how to access fun literacy games at home.

(Continue slide on next page)
We are going to take a few minutes to explore what we mean by a “literacy-rich home.”

1. You are going to work with a partner to draw a quick picture of things you’d find in a literacy-rich home.
2. This is not professional drawing. Use stick figures and rough sketches. It DOES NOT have to be anywhere near perfect.
3. Create and show a really rough sketch on a flipchart or white board so participants see a simple model. This could be of a book or two stick figures with music notes in a speech bubble.
4. Tell participants they have two minutes. Have fun. Go.
5. Walk around the room to see what participants are talking about and drawing. Call time after two minutes.

1. Ask: What important literacy skill did you just participate in?
2. Take one or two responses and then restate the answer: drawing. Share that drawing and scribbling build fine motor and pre-writing skills that children need to be able to write.
3. Debrief drawing activity by asking participants to share a few things from their drawings.
4. Acknowledge what participants mentioned and wrap-up by showing and reviewing any key elements that were missed.

A literacy-rich home is filled with:
1. Eating together.
2. Talking together.
3. Storytelling and reminiscing/memory sharing.
4. Singing.
5. Looking at letters, words, signs, and print together.
6. Playing with letters and words.
7. Sharing books together.
8. Scribbling, drawing, and writing together.
10. Doing chores together.
11. Driving together.
12. Going to the park.
13. Running errands together.

We are now going to practice a few important literacy skill builders you can do with your children.
There are so many ways to enjoy books together. Watch this video and see what you think is being learned.

**Funny Reading** *(or select a video from the list)*

As a table, talk about what was being learned in the video.

1. **Ask:** Why do you think playing with books this way is important?
2. Accept all answers.
3. **Ask:** Can we use some of the same ideas for storytelling? What if we start a story by saying, “the end and then the dragon...”?

*(Continue slide on next page)*
Think back to the memories we shared at the start of the workshop. We talked about the importance of storytelling and sharing books. We are going to take a few minutes to practice ways to enjoy stories and books together.

We are going to watch a Ready Rosie Video, Preview and Predict. Watch video up to 1:04 seconds.

There is a children's book at your table. Look at the book and talk as a group about what questions you would ask your child before reading, while reading, and after reading.

1. **Ask:** Why is it important to talk and ask questions when you are sharing books and stories?
2. Take all answers.
3. **Ask:** Can we use some of the same ideas for storytelling? **Answer:** Yes, stop in the middle of a story and ask, “what do you think is going to happen next...?”

Summarize the points made and wrap-up by stating that it is important to talk about books and stories with your children. It's good to ask questions:

- Before you start reading (like you saw in the video).
- While you are reading.
- After you are finished reading.
- Talking about books and sharing stories is important. It opens the world to your children. It builds vocabulary, pre-reading skills, bonding, knowledge, visual literacy, comprehension, listening skills, and participation in the story.
Slide 10  Storytelling/Reading Routine

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<th>ACTIVITY</th>
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<td><strong>Let's talk about how we can build a storytelling/reading routine at home.</strong></td>
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1. **Ask:** How many of you read or tell stories with your children daily? Ask for a show of hands.
2. **Ask:** How many of you have a library card? Ask for a show of hands.

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<th>DEBRIEF/REFLECT</th>
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| 1. **Ask:** What gets in the way of telling stories and sharing books daily? Accept all answers. 
2. **Debrief:** Summarize the barriers families share and ideas for overcoming them. Make sure you discuss how to get access to books. Encourage going to the public library and getting a library card, talking to your classroom teacher and borrowing books, going to garage and library sales to get used books.
3. **Reflect:** Ask participants to think about what they are willing to try this week to start or continue a reading/storytelling routine.
4. **Ask:** Participants to share a few of their ideas.
5. Reinforce that storytelling and reminiscing is always free and available anywhere, anytime.

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<th>SUMMARY</th>
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| Recap key points participants shared and then summarize key things to build a daily storytelling and book sharing routine at home: 
1. Find a special time for it each day (it can be on the go).
2. Get comfortable.
3. Make it fun.
4. Find good books (the library) and things that inspire you to tell stories (memories, props, wordless books).

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<th>Transition</th>
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| We are going to talk about one last important piece in our literacy-rich home.

Slide 11-17  Drawing and Writing Together

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<th>ACTIVITY</th>
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<td><strong>Drawing and writing are a way of communicating with one another with signs and symbols. Learning those symbols and how to form them are complicated skills and require lots of practice. We are going to have fun experiencing just how much work this is for our children.</strong></td>
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</table>
| 1. **Ask:** How did that feel? Imagine how much work it takes our children to learn to write. We would need to strengthen the fine motor muscles in our non-dominant hand, to be able to draw and write well with it.
2. **Ask:** What can you do to help your child build fine motor muscles? Have a few participants share their answers.
3. **Reflect:** It is important to give your children lots of opportunities to build fine motor skills. Many of these things are a natural part of daily life: eating, buttoning, zipping, picking things up, grasping, cutting things with children's scissors, holding cards, scribbling, drawing, stirring, etc.
4. Drawing and writing are developmental processes that takes time. Let's look at the stages of writing.
5. **Ask:** Share how your family includes writing and drawing in your family routine as a fun means of communicating with one another or with family and friends?  
**Reflect:** Listen to class answers. Share the following ideas if they not mentioned by the class: thank you pictures/notes, letters to Santa, tooth fairy/el raton, etc., “I love you” notes on a napkin in lunchbox or on a sticky note on a pillow, writing name on personal items, etc.
1. Remind families of the home practice and commitments you want them to focus on this week:
   » A reading routine
   » Playing the games they practiced during the workshop
   » Playing the game they found during the ReadyRosie practice activity
   » Encourage families to share the memory they talked about at the beginning of the workshop with their children
2. Share local community resources you want families to know about.
3. Remind participants about the next workshop in the series.
4. Have families complete the workshop survey before leaving class.

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Summary

1. Drawing/Writing is a complicated skill. It takes hand and finger strength (fine motor skills), eye-hand coordination, being able to use two hands, visual perception (being able to make sense of visual images, symbolic comprehension...).
2. Your role is to give your children lots of opportunities to draw and write and make it as enjoyable and fun as possible.

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ReadyRosie as a Learning Tool Practice

7 minutes

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Activity

We are going to spend 5 minutes navigating the ReadyRosie app, so you know how to find content.

Practice

We are going to start by finding some great writing activity ideas. We can search for content on the ReadyRosie App or Website.

1. Open the ReadyRosie App and log in. If your families are not using the RR app you will need to allow extra time for them to download the app and login. Or, you can assign this as their home practice to accomplish prior to the next workshop and show them how to do a search on using the ReadyRosie website.
2. Search for “writing together.”
3. Look for an activity that targets your child’s age.
4. Spend the next 3 minutes looking for a writing activity you are excited about trying.

Debrief/Reflect

Ask: What other topic(s) are you interested in finding for activities to do together?

Point back to the items the class said they wanted to learn about at the beginning of the literacy workshop. Encourage them to use the app to continue learning outside of the workshop.

Summary

You have access to the complete ReadyRosie library; so in addition to the weekly videos you receive, you can also look for specific content anytime.

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Closure

8 minutes

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Slide 19

Wrap-up (8 minutes)

Debrief/Reflect

1. Remind families of the home practice and commitments you want them to focus on this week:
   » A reading routine
   » Playing the games they practiced during the workshop
   » Playing the game they found during the ReadyRosie practice activity
   » Encourage families to share the memory they talked about at the beginning of the workshop with their children
2. Share local community resources you want families to know about.
3. Remind participants about the next workshop in the series.
4. Have families complete the workshop survey before leaving class.
Knowing your family stories builds confidence and self-awareness in your children. Storytelling is a fundamental way that children begin to form their identities.

Watch the Storytelling Story Train video.

Have each table create a story by playing the story train game.

Select at least one question and have a group or table discussion:

» How did it go?
» What is being learned?
» Do you think it will get easier with practice?
» Would your children enjoy playing this game with you?

Think of a childhood memory you would like to share with your child. What is it about? Who is part of the memory? What is happening? What senses come to mind when you think of this memory?

1. Take turns sharing your memory with a partner at your table. Allow a few minutes for sharing. Make sure each partner gets an opportunity to share a memory.

2. Ask: Do you share memories with your children?

3. Ask: Why is this important?

Storytelling or reminiscing may feel awkward initially, but it gets easier the more you do it. Your children will love the attention. It is free and can be done anywhere and anytime.

The stories you create together can then be labeled, dictated, or drawn.

If you can tell a story, you will ultimately be able to write a story.

When stories and memories are told to children in detailed and responsive ways, they build vocabulary, empathy, knowledge of what makes a good story, and the ability children need to tell their own stories.

Research shows that teenagers who have a strong sense of family history are better able to cope with teen stressors and feel more connected to their families.

Your home practice is to play the storytelling round robin game and take time this week to share your memory with your children.
The power of ReadyRosie is the ongoing follow up and support available digitally for families. Use SHARE to communicate with families and support their ongoing learning by sharing the videos that were covered in the recent workshop and any additional videos in this domain you think they will find inspirational. This message can also be sent to all the families who were unable to attend the workshop.

**Sample message:**
“Our recent family workshop focused on literacy-rich activities you can do at home with your children. Here are the videos we recommend you enjoy this week as part of your home learning.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>VIDEOS highlighted in the ReadyRosie Literacy Family Workshop:</th>
<th>Additional videos to share in this domain:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talking Together and Language Development</td>
<td>![Video Images]</td>
<td>BABY: Listening for Sounds</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>PRE-K: I’m Thinking of an Animal</td>
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<td>KINDERGARTEN – 1ST: Bag of Rhymes</td>
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<td>2ND – 3RD: Noun Charades</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shared Reading</td>
<td>![Video Images]</td>
<td>BABY: Book Chats</td>
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<td>PRE-K: Reading the Grocery List</td>
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<td>KINDERGARTEN – 1ST: Picture Walk Predictions</td>
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<td>2ND – 3RD: Read A Little Think A Little</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Together</td>
<td>![Video Images]</td>
<td>BABY: Color with Me</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Activity</strong> (no videos)</td>
<td></td>
<td>PRE-K: Writing Names with Shaving Cream</td>
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<td>KINDERGARTEN – 1ST: Simon Says Draw</td>
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<td>2ND – 3RD: Sketching the Story</td>
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<tr>
<td>Storytelling</td>
<td>![Video Images]</td>
<td>BABY: Tell Me a Story</td>
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<td>PRE-K: Retelling the Story</td>
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<td>KINDERGARTEN – 1ST: Storybook Storytelling</td>
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|                                 |                                                               | 2ND – 3RD: The Story of Your Name